(b) how far Government succeeded in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) The presence of Bodo/ ULFA militants on Bhutanese territory has been a subject of discussion with Bhutan. Both sides share concern on this issue. The Government of Bhutan has reiterated that it would not allow their territory to be misused against the interest of India. India and Bhutan remain in constant touch to find a solution to this issue and are cooperating with each other in this regard.

The Government of India has been regularly taking up various security-related issues including cross border terrorism and activities of North-East insurgent groups with Bangladesh at different levels through diplomatic channels and institutional mechanism existing between the two countries. The Bangladesh Government has stated that it would not allow undesirable elements to use its territory for activities prejudicial to the security interest of India.

The Government of Myanmar has been sensitised from time to time about our concern over the problem of terrorism and the activities of North-Eastern insurgents. The Government of Myanmar has assured us repeatedly that it would not allow any anti-India activities to be carried out from its soil.

The Government of India is regularly in touch with the Government of Thailand, has conveyed to them its security concerns and has been receiving cooperation from them.

Incidents of Forged Passports

2954. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) how many incidents of forged passport indicating Indian origin were reported in the last three years;

(b) whether there is any plan to introduce a fool proof system of issuing passports;

(c) if so, by when; and

(d) whether there would be any fee hike in issuance of passports ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) The number of cases of Indians

detected for holding forged travel documents at major airports in the country in the last three years is as under :

Years	No. of cases
1997	1903
1998	1735
1999	1469

(b) and (c) passports are being issued with due police verification which inter alia, establishes the Indian nationality of the applicant. If a passport is issued on post-police verification basis or police report over due basis and if the subsequent police report is adverse then the passport is revoked or impounded.

Among the new measures proposed in the coming months are introduction of machine writing of passport booklets initially at the Regional Passport Office, Delhi and transfer of personal particulars of passport holders from Index Cards to CD-ROMs which would facilitate checking of records.

(d) As per the Passport Act, 1967 the passport fee is to be prescribed to meet all the expenditure of issuing passports. The present passport fee regime was fixed in 1993. The fee needs to be revised now to meet the normal rise in the costs since 1993 and to cover the expenditure on modernization and computerization of passport offices.

Passports Issued without Police Scrutiny

2955. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned '50 percent of passports issued sans police scrutiny' published in the Hindu dated 2nd March, 2000;

(b) if so, the details of the alarming large number of passports being issued by the Regional Passport Office, Hyderabad without prior police verification of the applicant's antecedents;

(c) the reasons, therefor; and

(d) what action is/has been taken by the Government in this regard and action taken against the responsible officials in this connection ?